

Parliament at this moment. We cannot, once the House has committed itself to the provisions of the treaty, take exception to anything therein conceded. A new embassy would say naturally: You, the representatives of the nation to the north—those for whom you speak have already agreed to concede what you now object to. This we knew you were ready to concede without hesitation, and we expect something more at your hands. And so the hon. gentlemen seem not to be satisfied with the humiliation which they have brought upon themselves and the humiliation they have brought upon the country by the propositions which are now before us for ratification, but, before they are at all sure, or, as I believe, when they are very sure, that these propositions will not be accepted by the Senate of the United States, they seek to commit this House to them. Why this indecent haste to commit this Parliament to the propositions of the Minister of Finance before we know whether the neighboring Republic, or those who represent the neighboring Republic, accept these concessions at our hands? Has Lord Salisbury importuned this Government to hurry the matter in this way? Is he afraid that the headland question may be raised again by the people of Canada? Is he afraid that these questions between the two countries may be again raised in consequence of the exasperating regulations in regard to customs, and in connection with the Department of Marine and Fisheries? Why do hon. gentlemen opposite press us to give an answer or to give an opinion on this subject before we know what opinion will be expressed by the Senate of the United States? We have everything to gain by awaiting the action of the Senate of the United States, and we have a great deal to lose if they should reject this treaty after we have affirmed it. What does the Minister of Finance hope to gain by this House affirming that treaty? Does he propose, or is it his desire, to convince an exasperated nation that those who represented them on this Commission made a bad bargain, and that the arrangement which was made is so satisfactory to the people of Canada that they have not hesitated to accept it immediately and without dispute? That is to call upon us to make an affirmation which we know to be false. We know what our position is. We know that it is one of humiliation, and we ought to be spared the further humiliation of having these extraordinary concessions rejected by those to whom they have been made. The Minister of Finance has told us in his speech that the protection of the fisheries has never been made a party question. I believe that is true. I believe that the protection of the fisheries was earnestly desired by both sides of the House, but the protection of the fisheries and the concession to another country of the sovereignty over our fisheries, or a common right to our fisheries, is a wholly different thing, and when the hon. gentleman speaks of the protection of the fisheries and then refers to the provisions of this treaty, he is referring to two things as far apart as they can be. This treaty does not provide for protection; it is a surrender. The conditions in this treaty which, possibly within the next twenty-four hours, the United States will either have postponed or rejected, are not provisions by which proper protection is to be given to our fisheries, but is a concession of more than half of the area which we claim to be within the jurisdiction of this country. There are many thousands of square miles, which we claim to be under Canadian jurisdiction or under the jurisdiction of Newfoundland, which are proposed to be surrendered to the United States under this treaty. Two years ago we were promised a vigorous police policy to protect our fisheries. That policy, we were told, was supplemental to the so-called National Policy. It was on the same lines, it was for the same purpose, it involved the same principles, it professed to be intended for the interests of the people of this country, but it proved to be anything but that. It was

Mr. MILLS (Bothwell).

inefficient, it was exasperating. Why, we had before us last year abundant evidence, furnished by the senior member for Halifax (Mr. Jones) and the hon. member for Queen's, P. E. I. (Mr. Davies) showing that hundreds of vessels from the United States engaged in fishing within the three mile limit; and that, while harsh customs regulations were in force, and while harsh and unjust police regulations were carried out, so as to irritate the people of the neighboring Republic and to give them an opportunity of exciting the resentment of their fellow countrymen, there was really nothing done to protect our own fishermen. Two years before the Washington Treaty was denounced by the United States, this Government were notified, and they were advised that it would be well, before that provision of the Washington Treaty came to an end, to enter at that time into negotiations with the United States, so that there would be no worrying police regulations, because at that time those fishermen had still the right to engage in fishing in our waters with the fishermen of this country. The same view was taken by Lord Derby, who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies. That nobleman addressed three communications to the Government of this country without receiving any response. It was not until he sent the fourth that they gave him any answer and the concluding words of that fourth despatch were:

"In the face of these circumstances, my Government does not consider that it would be consistent with the respect which it owes to itself to appear as a suitor for concessions at the hands of the United States."

It was not necessary that the Government should appear in the position which they seemed to have considered it necessary for them to appear, as suppliants. It was only necessary for them to invite communication and negotiation; but hon. gentlemen upon the Treasury benches had a high idea of their own dignity, and one would suppose from the observations which I have read, that they had studied the diplomatic negotiations which were carried on two centuries ago, when the treaties of Osnabruck and Westphalia and Madrid were negotiated, when the ambassadors took different sides of the room, and watched each others' legs when anyone moved, because the man who stepped first was supposed to be sacrificing his sovereign's dignity. In one place, there was a special building put up for the ambassadors to assemble in, and in that there were as many doors as there were ambassadors, so that no one could have precedence of another; and there was also a round table provided at which they might sit so that no question of distinction might arise when their negotiations were being carried on. It seems to me that it is in this spirit that the hon. gentlemen occupying the Treasury benches have approached a great question affecting the friendly relations between this country and the neighboring Republic, a question of the most vital consequence to this country, whatever it might be to the country to the South of us. We find in the history of hon. gentlemen opposite a continuation of these lofty pretensions and this proud reserve. We find that they have passed these officious customs regulations which could not help us, but must exasperate the feelings of our neighbors to the South. Then, we have the fisheries regulations which in some cases were cruel and unjust as well as unwise and unnecessary. See what were the means employed by these hon. gentlemen to promote the well-being of this country and to secure friendly relations with those of the neighboring Republic? First, Sir, they proposed to be extremely generous; they said to the people of the United States when it was too late to carry on negotiations, when Congress had no longer an opportunity of expressing an opinion upon the subject, or of agreeing to any proposition that might be made: You may have free use of our fisheries for a season, if the President will permit fish to be carried free into the neighboring Republic. Well, Sir, the President informed these